

Empowerment for Healthy Hospital

Sophia Chan PhD, MPH, MEd, RN, RSCN, FFPH, FAAN

Professor and Director of Research, School of Nursing, The University of Hong Kong, HKSAR, China

Introduction

Over five million people die each year from a cause that can be attributed to tobacco. The number of current smokers in China has exceeded 300 million, and the smoking prevalence of male doctors is high. Previous studies shows that the decrease of smoking in doctors could lead to a smoking rate decline, and the development of smoke-free hospitals could encourage a smoke-free society. Promotion of smoking cessation in hospital is essential to protect patients from smoking hazards and a healthy hospital should provide smoke-free environment. This paper aims to report the evaluation of the processes and outcomes of two case examples in capacity building and empowerment of health care professionals in China and their subsequent efforts in developing healthy and smoke-free hospitals in China.

Methods

The first project funded by Cancer Research United Kingdom has 3 phases including (1) capacity building programmes; (2) establishment of smoking cessation clinics in three hospitals in Guangzhou: Guangzhou 12th hospital (GZ12H), Guangzhou Chest hospital (GZCH) and 301 hospital (301H) in Beijing; and (3) process and outcome evaluation of the effort. The second project funded by the Temasek Foundation, Singapore has a strong focus of empowerment and dissemination included (1) needs assessment of the health care professionals in Guangdong province (focus groups); (2) development of special-designed curricula to build capacity and empower nurse managers, community nurses, and nurses educators. After participated in the training, they were expected to transfer their knowledge and skills through Training of Trainers (TOT) programmes to their colleagues across the province; (3) Dissemination and evaluation of the cascading effects and impact of the training efforts. Both projects adopted a rigorous and longitudinal evaluation to assess the process, outcome, and sustainability.

Results

In CRUK project, a total of 72 HCPs were trained to be smoking cessation counselors in 2008 and 2009. 1271 smokers received smoking cessation counseling in the three smoking cessation clinics from 2008 to 2010. At 6-month follow up, 7-day point prevalence quit rate were 33.8%, 45.7% and 31.4% in GZ12H, GZCH and 301H respectively. The hospital has successfully awarded the status of smoke-free hospital by the Ministry of Health. In the Temasek project started in 2010, 60 HCPs from 54 institutions were recruited by the Department of Health of Guangdong province, and participated in a 2-week training programme on tobacco-related chronic disease prevention and cessation skills in Guangzhou and in Hong Kong. We assessed the participants' knowledge, attitudes, and practice in tobacco control efforts and smoking cessation at pre-post, and at 6 month after the training , and results indicated a significant improvement ($p < 0.001$) both at post-training and 6 month follow up. The participants have also further trained over 10953 health care professionals in the GD province.

Discussion and Conclusions

The two projects have shown success in the empowerment of HCPs, and how their efforts have initiated the development of smoke-free hospitals in China. Trained HCPs applied their knowledge into practice by setting up smoking cessation clinics and assisting smokers to achieve a favorable quit rate. Through this process of empowerment and capacity building, not only has the participants cascaded their knowledge and skills to many others in the province, evidence has also shown that they have increased their own capabilities, paved the way for the development of smoke free hospitals and enhanced its overall capacities, and finally, influenced hospital policies and made institutional changes.